



## National Parks Conservation Association®

*Protecting Our National Parks for Future Generations®*

Southwest Regional Office

307 West 200 South  
Suite 5000  
Salt Lake City, UT 84101  
801.521.0785 (phone)  
801.359.2367 (fax)

February 25, 2008

Dear Cheryl Heying –

The National Parks Conservation Association is a nonprofit citizen organization dedicated to protecting our national parks for present and future generations. NPCA's Southwest Regional Office is located at 307 West 200 South, Suite 5000, Salt Lake City, Utah 84101.

NPCA's purpose is to protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources of America's National Park System including its forests, wilderness, and open space areas through research, public education, advocacy, and litigation. NPCA was founded in 1919, and today has approximately 340,000 members nationwide; over 2,000 members reside in Utah. NPCA, with its members, is active in protecting the air quality and related values in our National Park System which includes Arches, Bryce Canyon, Canyonlands, Capitol Reef, and Zion National Parks.

NPCA and its membership is concerned by the proposal to build the 750 megawatt Toquop coal-fired power plant. This new plant will have the potential to impact air quality and visibility in nearby National Parks including Zion and Bryce Canyon. The Southwest including Utah and its wealth of national parks is already under assault from existing coal-fired power plants and oil and gas development. Adding additional sources of pollutants including 7.08 million tons per year of carbon dioxide, 198 pounds of mercury, 1,589 tons per year of nitrogen oxides and 1,351 tons per year of sulfur oxides will degrade an already fragile resource. Utah's national parks are Class I airsheds afforded the highest level of protection by the Clean Air Act. Our political leadership is beginning to recognize the human impacts on our air quality and climate. Governor Jon Huntsman has recently joined the Western Governors Climate Initiative and Utah is working on a greenhouse gas cap and trade program in conjunction with 5 other western states and two Canadian provinces. Citing the impacts to Great Basin, Bryce Canyon

NPCA Headquarters  
1300 19th Street NW • Suite 300 • Washington, DC 20036  
202.223.NPCA(6722) • Fax 202.659.0650 • [npca@npca.org](mailto:nPCA@npca.org) • [www.nPCA.org](http://www.nPCA.org)

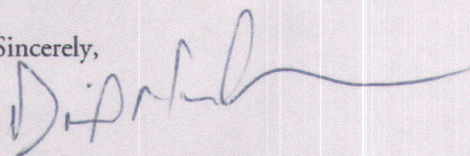


and Zion National Parks, Senator Harry Reid has publicly stated his opposition to building new coal-fired power plants in Nevada. We urge Governor Gibbons to join in this growing opposition to the continued reliance on coal.

Clean air is critical to the extraordinary vistas of the parks, the wildlife, cultural resources and the visitor experience. Coal-fired power plants contribute to haze and degrade the pristine air quality of the national parks. Carbon dioxide from these plants is a significant contributor to global warming. Air pollution and climate change are the most significant factors affecting the health of parks and they degrade the visitor experience. Healthy parks contribute to healthy rural economies. Statistics highlight the tremendous economic benefit to the local rural communities and to the state from the national parks. For example, Zion's 2004 visitation was 2,677,342. Zion National Park visitors spent \$83 million and provided over 2,000 local jobs.

Visitors from around the world come to Utah to visit the land that previous generations had the foresight to preserve and protect. Pristine landscapes, vistas and night skies translate into money for our local communities. Carbon dioxide emissions from the proposed plant will only further hasten the debilitating effects of climate change that is apparent at our national parks. It is NPCA's belief that allowing the Toquop Energy Project to be built will be tragic for the health of Utah's national parks, for Utah's tourism and for Utah's citizen's.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Nimkin", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Nimkin  
Southwest Regional Director  
National Parks Conservation Association